

## Dr. Burgess Weekly Address July 12, 2019

### Serving North Texas Veterans

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Hello, this is your Congressman Michael Burgess.

On Monday, it was my privilege to visit the new VA Behavioral Health Center in Denton during the first day of its operations. This facility, now known as The Annex, will help North Texas veterans access quality mental health care close to home.

As your Congressman, one of my top priorities is to support our neighbors who have served and sacrificed for our country. In the past year, it was an honor to work alongside the Trump Administration, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the United Way of Denton County to assist in the opening of this new clinic.

Access to quality health care – including mental health care – is imperative to our veterans' wellbeing. Our nation's recent increase of veteran suicide is both tragic and unacceptable consequence of war. At the Department of Veterans Affairs, Secretary Robert Wilkie is leading our nation's efforts to support veterans who are at-risk for suicide.

Last month, the VA announced that it has filled nearly 4,000 mental health positions nationwide. This expanded capacity will provide almost 120,000 additional veterans with access to high-quality mental health services each year. Addressing the veteran suicide crisis requires a multifaceted approach. Though there isn't a single solution, we are making positive steps in the right direction.

The VA has estimated that Texas will have the largest number of veterans of any state by 2025. This is a tremendous benefit to our state, and it is more important than ever that we have the resources and capacity to support our veteran population. I am grateful that The Annex will provide quality care in the 26<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, and I will continue to support North Texas veterans.

As always, I appreciate your comments and your questions on this issue or any other issue. May God bless you and your family, may God bless our veterans, and as the song says, God bless you Texas.